



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Chris Abele

MILWAUKEE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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***County Executive Abele Directs Hiring of Outside Counsel
to Propose Actions to Limit Pension “Backdrops”
Supervisor Lipscomb, Abele Join in Effort to Cut Huge Payments***

MILWAUKEE – Milwaukee County Executive Chris Abele is directing the county’s corporation counsel to hire outside attorneys to recommend specific actions to curtail the continuing huge “backdrop” pension payments to retirees, it was announced Tuesday.

Noting the continuing payments over 10 years, Abele said: “It’s clear that not enough has been done to rein in or end these outrageous payments. It’s time to focus on this problem.”

Supervisor Theodore Lipscomb joined Abele in support of identifying legal actions that could be taken. “The county must aggressively explore all options and take whatever steps it can to avoid these outlandish backdrop payments,” Lipscomb said.

The lump-sum backdrop payments to retirees have totaled near \$200 million since they began 10 years ago.

Just last month, a total of \$14.2 million in lump-sum backdrop payments were made to 79 retirees. One retiree received a \$1.03 million lump-sum payment, and another was paid \$822,073. Forty-one other retirees received more than \$100,000 each in lump-sum payments last month. These retirees also are receiving monthly pensions and in many cases received additional payments for unused sick leave and vacation.

“I’m never going to let the lack of progress in the past stop me from trying to make improvements,” Abele said. “County taxpayers, who are footing these bills, deserve no less.”

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